

society. And one of the big efforts we're going to make this year in this saving Social Security is to do something about this dramatic difference in the poverty rate. And it would be much, much lower if no one had ever had the experiences you just heard described.

[Secretary Herman commented that the pension gap was even greater than the 75-cents-to-every-dollar gap for regular wages and that only 40 percent of women had pension coverage. The First Lady then introduced Patricia Higgins, a nurse who had encountered subtle wage discrimination in her field. She said that while the profession required idealism and dedication, medical advances meant that levels of training, skill, and responsibility had increased, and compensation should also increase. Secretary Herman commented that many institutions had good policies and procedures which were often not supported in practice. She said the administration was supporting legislation to share salary information without fear of reprisal and asked Ms. Tyler if she thought that would be helpful.

Ms. Tyler stated that pursuing her case in court had been very successful and generated real dollars for the many coaches affected.]

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say on behalf of all of us, we're delighted that you're here. We especially thank Senator Harkin and Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton for their leadership, and we thank our panelists. They were all terrific.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The discussion began at 1:53 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Title IX—Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, part of Public Law 92–318, the Education Amendments of 1972. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the full text of the remarks of the First Lady and the roundtable participants. The National Equal Pay Day proclamation of April 7 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Airstrikes Against Serbian Targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

April 7, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I reported to the Congress on March 26, 1999, on the participation of U.S. military forces in the series of air strikes conducted by NATO in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) in response to the FRY government's campaign of violence and repression against the ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. Since my report on March 26, there have been dramatic and very serious developments in the FRY. Belgrade's sustained and accelerating repression is creating a humanitarian disaster of staggering dimensions. Estimates now are that well over one million Kosovars have been displaced from their homes and villages. At this time, more than 400,000 Kosovars are in Albania, Macedonia, and Montenegro.

The worsening instability in Kosovo directly threatens peace in the region. We will continue to intensify our actions to achieve the objectives I described in my report to the Congress of March 26 and to support the international relief

efforts being conducted in the region. I have directed U.S. military forces to deploy to Albania and Macedonia in order to support humanitarian disaster relief operations for the Kosovar refugees. These relief efforts will include delivering food and supplies, constructing shelters, providing coordination and assisting in logistics movement of displaced persons and relief supplies, and when necessary, providing protection for displaced persons and relief supplies. As a force protection measure, the U.S. military forces will be equipped for combat.

Separate from this effort, I have also ordered additional U.S. forces to Albania. These forces consist of rotary wing aircraft, artillery, and tactical missile systems and will be stationed in Albania to provide a deep strike task force to enhance NATO's ability to conduct effective air operations in the FRY. Approximately 2,500 soldiers and aviators will deploy as part of this task force. The mission of the force does not include deploying into the FRY.

It is not possible to predict how long either of these operations will continue. The duration of the deployments depend upon the course of events in Kosovo, and in particular, on Belgrade's conduct with respect to its campaign of ethnic cleansing and the duration of the threat posed to peace and security in the region. It is our objective to transfer responsibilities for the relief effort to other organizations over time, and to redeploy those U.S. forces, in all circumstances, as soon as the situation permits.

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. In doing so, I have taken into ac-

count the views and support expressed by the Congress in S. Con. Res. 21 and H. Con. Res. 42.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Premier Zhu Rongji of China *April 8, 1999*

Premier Zhu, Madam Lao, members of the Chinese delegation, distinguished guests. Premier Zhu, welcome to the White House and welcome to the United States. Your visit is an important event in the long relations between our people, a relationship that spans nearly the entire history of the United States. Before this city even existed, even before our Constitution was signed, China granted our newly independent Nation equal standing with the powers of Europe.

In the late 18th century, it took a ship sailing out of Boston over a year to make the voyage to China and back. Today, our people can communicate back and forth in less than the time needed to speak this sentence. But better communication has not always brought better comprehension.

We have done great things together, and we have disagreed on many occasions. For over two decades in this century, we had no conversations at all. That was not healthy for either China or the United States.

At the dawn of a new century, we now recognize that our interests coincide on many issues and diverge on some others but that we have a fundamental responsibility to speak with candor and listen with an open mind. And certainly, we can agree that China and the United States can best achieve our hopes in the next century if we continue to build a constructive strategic

partnership, a relationship that allows us to make progress on the issues that matter to our people.

Those issues include stopping the spread of deadly weapons, building a secure and stable Asia-Pacific region, ensuring free and fair trade under international rules, promoting economic growth while protecting the environment, embracing the universal principles of political freedom and human dignity.

Mr. Premier, under your leadership, China has pursued wise economic policies, striving to maintain growth, low inflation, a stable currency. You have fought hard against corruption, reinvented your government to make it more efficient, and reformed state-owned enterprises.

China's stability during the Asian economic crisis has been crucial to Asia's hopes for a recovery. That has been good for millions of Asians who depend upon China's economic health and for millions of Americans, from small investors to farmers to people who work for the many companies doing business in China. America has a stake in China's success, in a China that has overcome the challenges it faces at home, a China that is integrated into the institutions that promote global norms on proliferation, trade, and the environment, a China that respects human rights and promotes peace.

I am grateful for the Premier's visit, following up on President Jiang's visit here and my visit